

Rubella

Agent: Rubella virus

Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person transmission through contact with nose and throat secretions from infected people. The virus may also be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy, causing congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) in the infant.

Signs/Symptoms: Fever and rash, with frequent occurrences of joint pain, arthritis, and swelling of the lymph nodes.

Prevention: Vaccination, administered as MMR vaccine, should begin at 12 months of age.

Other Important Information: In 2004, rubella was declared to no longer be endemic in the United States, although a small number of cases continue to be imported.

No cases of rubella were reported in Virginia during 2016. The most recent cases reported in Virginia occurred in 2010 in two unvaccinated individuals. Prior to 2010, the last reported case occurred in 2001. Nationally, one case of rubella and two cases of congenital rubella syndrome were reported in 2016. Five cases of rubella and one case of congenital rubella syndrome were reported in the U.S. in 2015.

While rubella elimination has been maintained in the U.S., it is important to sustain high vaccination rates because rubella is endemic and remains a problem in other parts of the world. Since 2012, all rubella cases in the U.S. had evidence that infection occurred while living or traveling outside the country. It is important that all children and women of childbearing age be vaccinated against rubella as evidenced by the more than 100,000 babies born worldwide with CRS every year.